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Die Mercurii 29. Novemb. 1643.

**I**T is this day Ordered by the Commons assembled in Parliament, that M<sup>r</sup>. Stephens doe return thanks to M<sup>r</sup>. Mewe for the great pains he took in the Sermon he preached this day at S<sup>t</sup>. Margarets in Westminster at the intreaty of the House of Commons, being the day of publique Humiliation. And it is Ordered his said Sermon be printed.

H. Elsing. Cler. Parl. D. Com.

**I** Authorize Christopher Moredish or his Assignes to print my Sermon,

WILLIAM MEWE.

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1 10

THE  
ROBBING  
AND  
SPOILING  
OF  
JACOB and ISRAEL:

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Considered and bewailed, in  
A SERMON

Preached at *Westminster* before the *Honourable House of Commons*, at the late solemn *Fast*, Nov. 29. 1643.

BY

WILLIAM MEVVE B. D. Rector of *Eastington*  
in the County of *Gloucester* and one of the Members of  
this present Assembly of *DIVINES*.

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Published by Order of that House.

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ECCLES. 4. 1.

*I considered all the oppressions that are done under the Sun, and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no Comforter, and on the side of the oppressors there was power, but they had no Comforter.*

2. *Therefore I praised the dead which are already dead, more then the living which are yet alive.*

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Printed at London for CHRISTOPHER MEREDITH  
dwelling at the Crane in Pauls Church-yard. 1643.

# THE ROBBING AND SPOILING OF

JACOB and ISRAEL:

Considered and bowled in  
A SERMON

Preached at Westminster before the Honourable House of  
Commons, at the late solemn Fast, Nov. 22. 1643.

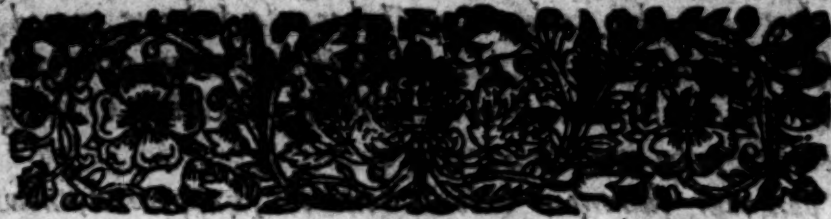
WILLIAM MEEVE, B.D. Rector of Loughborough  
in the County of Glamorgan and one of the Members of  
this present Assembly of DIVINES.

Published by Order of the House.

ECCL. 4. 1.

I confess that all the oppressions that are done under the Sun, and behold  
the tears of such as were oppressed, and they laid down their heads, and we  
the Lord of the oppressed, we have not seen, but they had no reward.  
Therefore I praised the dead which are already dead, more than the  
living which are yet alive.

Printed in London for CHRISTOPHER MARRIS  
dwelling at the Church in Paris Church-yard, 1643.



TO  
THE HONOURABLE  
HOUSE OF COMMONS,  
now assembled in Parliament.



Our reverend attension during the length of this service, together with a deportment suitable to the duty of the day, and matter in hand, gave me to conceive that your hearts were kindly warmed by a better spirit then yours or mine; and because you command a farther impression of this work, I am further instructed to conceive; 1. that besides the hearing ear, there is (you know) to be employed A seeing PROV. 20. 12. eye, both which are the gift of the Lord; 2. that having bought the truth as tryed gold, the filings are not to be lost; 3. that upon your tryall (what ever some say) you are willing the wise should judge whether you are taken with sounding brasse, or any thing rather then Crown gold.

These reasons (besides your command) are pressing arguments with me to make this Sermon publique to the whole (as well as to the representative) body of our Commonalty,



## THE EPISTLE.

and now I leave it to Gods blessing and your patronage, which I may the rather expect, because I have prayed for the former, and the latter is implied in your command, to which I owe (and will yeeld) this kind of obedience though I were sure to be made a Sacrifice.

Amos 7. 14.

Vpon your summons (Noble Senators) I appeared, knowing that God and his Vicegerents can make use of mean Instruments for high imployments, whereof had I not been convinced, I should have fled (with Jonah) to my Country, goord, with the hazard of a storm; or (with Amos) disavowed my function, rather then speak (so freely as I did) in the heard-mans language, and tell this (my) mother City, that for three great oversights, and for four, (to say no worse nor more) God hath a few things against her, which I complained of in this sad message.

As first, though she professes to hate the works of the Malignants, yet there are those (if not in her bosom, yet) on her skirts, that say they are true to Church and State, but are indeed of another Synagogue, and by their blasphemy proclaim it loud enough, that either they went out from us, or were never of us; and when the wine hath lightened their braines, they make light of our Parents nakednesse, discover it without shame or sorrow in the streets at noon-day; where the sad spoiles and robberies of our Nation, are made matter either of sporting Pamphlets, or merry discourse; to meet with these, I made it my first work to tell you in sadnesse, that the plundering and spoiling of a people was a sad and shamefull penalty.

Isa 3. 19.

Secondly, (though she own not the doctrine of Baal) yet she harbours such Doctors as Baalam, that peep, and mutter, and would amuse the Land with tales from the stars, and old-wives-fables, as if the Planets had met in a Counsell of war, and (by an Arbitrary power of their own) condemned

our

## THE EPISTLE.

our present State to a fatall desolation; to meet with these, I was to give you Information from the Iudge of all the world (speaking to the case, and concluding) that what was done he did it, and did us but right in it.

Thirdly, though she have many golden heads, that appear active in subtle contrivances, she hath more leaden hearts, and (setting aside the great Councel) hath too few of those that consider her case aright, and lay it to heart: to meet with these, the last part of my message was to put home Christs counsell to that Church of Sardis that had a foot in the grave, yet a step there was betwixt death and us, if we timely took her cordiall (viz.) to remember what we have heard and received. This (if any thing) would quicken us to give the Lord a meeting, and thereby prevent the wrath to come.

These things (worthy Patriots) you have heard, and that you might the better reform them, and know how to behave your selves in Gods method, beginning with his own house, you have chosen an Assembly of such Counsellors as you and all may confide in: (To whom I should have thought it honour enough for me to have been a door-keeper) their peaceable conflicts and pious debates want nothing but his Majesties ears to make them hear well throughout the Land, being indeed a precious reserve, (such as the Lord promises to leave for hot service in the most conflicting times, Zeph. 3. 12. who doubtlesse will come up in the Rear, and doe worthily in Ephrata.

Former times have made a great noise about the Church or place of Gods worship, but these later (with Gods blessing upon your indeavours) may produce the power and purity of it. I shall pray that our Dread Sovereign may live to see and say of Gods house (as that Emperour did of Roome, Invenit lateritiam & reliquit marmoream) he found it thacht and over-topt with Lauds, Wrens, Cousens, &c. but will  
leave

## THE EPISTLE.

Let it adorned and paved with Whitakers, Prestons, and  
Sibbes, cum multis aliis. The work is great indeed, but  
there is a great God that hath a great hand in it, and (as you  
have been told by a good providence more than once) will send  
Auxiliaries from heaven, proportionable, at least, to the  
strongest oppositions. To this purpose the God of heaven re-  
turn an answer to your prayers, for the peaceable returne  
of our Sovereign, which is or should be the daily suit of  
those that wish well to our publique wel-fare, and resolve  
to live or die in the pursuit of this blessing. Amongst  
whom you have so command, the endeavours, and prayers of

Chancery Lane this 19.

of Decemb. 1643.

Your humble servant

in Christs worke,

WILLIAM MEVE





# A S E R M O N

## PREACHED AT THE

late Fast before the Honourable  
House of Commons.

ISAIAH 42. 24, 25.

*Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not the Lord, he, against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his Law.*

*Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battell: and it hath set him on fire round about, and he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.*



Hich words (as you may perceive Honourable and beloved) are a text so sadly open'd to our hand, a Prophecy so clearly fulfilled in our eyes, that *he which runs may reade it, as an Hand-writing upon our wals, foretelling* Dan. 5. *the ruine and period even of our Israel also, unlesse it please the Lord graciously to step in betwixt us and the wrath to come.*

Luke 4 18.

I shall not need therefore by way of clearing a passage to the words, to say much more then what our Saviour did in opening a Prophecy in this book, which (after reading the words) he closed up again and told them, *This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears, and they all bare him witness.* Nor shall I need by way of preface, to say more then the Prophet here doth immediately before the Text, to quicken up your attention, *Who amongst you will give ear to this, who will hearken and hear for the time to come?* where he lifts up his voice like a Trumpet to make way, & then follows the Lords Declaration in the words which I have read. *Who gave Jacob for a spoil, &c.*

Ezek 9.4.

Briefly (to come in upon them with the best speed I may) this whole Sermon of the Prophet (beginning at the first v. of this chapter, and ending at the 13. verse of the next) is a Prophecy so strangely enterwoven with threats and promises, that it appears as so much Checker-work of Judgements and mercies; *hear a little of the one, then as much of the other*, with line upon line, judgement upon mercy, very suitable to his hearers, which we may conceive to have been a mixed number, for it is well known, that the *sinners in Sion*, and *mourners in Sion* in those days were so blended and mixt together that there needed a Divine hand to mark the one from the other.

yer. 12.

In the former part of this chapter we have the Lord Jesus exhibited to us as one most eminently set off with all the gracious endowments that might win upon the hearts of the worst of men; to this purpose the Prophet tells us <sup>1</sup> Negatively, what by his office he was not; and then <sup>2</sup> Positively, what he was, <sup>1</sup> no quarreller or striker, so far from that unpleasing work, that he was not to *cry*, nor *lift up*, nor *cause his voice to be heard in the streets*, y. 2. so far from raising uproars or tumults, that he

he appears not in the *strong wind*, or *Earthquake*, or *fire*, but in a still voice, which should neither *break* the bruised 1 King. 19. 12.  
*Reed*, or quench the *smoking Flax*, *v. 3. That sword which* Mat. 10. 34.  
 he brought into the world with him, was not to be drawn, *if peace spoken to the heathen might prevail*: his Zach. 9. 10.  
 meaning is, he would not by force of arms drag or drive his conquered number into obedience, this was not his office; but <sup>2<sup>d</sup></sup> the course of his office, positively, was to find eyes and feet for his followers, or at least to knock off the bolts and chains that they might be at liberty to follow him freely and faithfully, *v. 7*. Now if (notwithstanding all this) there should be a perverse party amongst them of the *sons of Belial*, that would refuse his gentle yoke, and break his bands asunder, close up their eyes against the light and fight it out in the dark, the Lord will see the quarrell of his son, (or as he calls him, *ver. 1*. his servant) revenged to the full upon that people, *ver. 13, 14*. If the *Prince of peace* were silent, the *Lord of Hosts* would speak in his cause, yea and fight too, very severely; not onely *cry and reare*, but *destroy* and devour at once; yea, the longer he held his peace, the lower he would be when he comes to complain; the farther he drew back his hand, the deeper would be the wound when he comes to strike.

Which (by the way) may serve as a warning caution to that Nation or people (suppose it be ours) that have had more of Christs company then they care for, more of his proffered Grace then they are willing to accept or acknowledge; when God comes to reckon for this, though that Nation were as neer and dear to him as *Jacob*, or *Israel*, of whom he speaks with honourable mention, *Hos. 12. 45*. one that was excellent at the duty wherein we are now imployed, *could weep and make supplication*, and by his strength had *power with God*; Yet if the



VER. 21.

prevailing party amongst them were strong enough, to trample down those *Honourable Laws*, which he *had magnified* on purpose for the advantage of his people; when he is thus provoked by a lawlesse number, he professes openly he will have an holy (though an heavy) hand in the ruine and spoyl of that people; and when he hath done, leaves it with the world to judge, whether there were not all the reason in the world for what he did, when he *gave Jacob to the spoyl, and Israel to the robbers, &c.* and thus we are come through the context to the words.

Which being very clear and plain, I conceive it would be time impertinently spent to give accompt what Interpreters say of the words, or dash their judgements one against the other; this (I take it) were but to strike fire and light up a candle at noon-day, to seek for that which is neither hid nor lost, this is no time or place to be luxuriant in Criticisms; and as for parts, if I had not learned that [*Aequē confusa est divisio nimia ac nulla*] I would spare divisions, were it not to prevent confusion: briefly therefore to help our memories you may cast up the full sum of the words into these three generall parts.

1. *A penalty inflicted*; Jacob, & Israel, given to the plunder, & spoyl; the robbers and spoylers have it in Commission under Gods hand to plunder him; this is the penalty, and (as we shall see) a very sad and shamefull one.

2. *The cause alleaged*, together with the vindictive party that appears in it, let me put them both together for better expedition and satisfaction, in case it be demanded, Is this legall? shall not the *Judge* of all the world doe right? will the King of Kings leave such a precedent upon record to his vicegerents to plunder their own subjects? to which he answers, there was a cause, and there was this cause, upon which he avouches the fact under his hand, (in words at length, and not in figures)

gures) Did not she Lord? which with the Hebrew Emphasis doubles the Answer (q.d.) I did it, and will justify it.

3. The acknowledgement required with the most serious consideration that may be, as appears partly by the quickning preface, wherein the Prophet summons all those that have ears to hear, or hearts to consider, that they would have a care of this duty: Partly by way of exprobration, charging home the neglect as a great delinquency, Yet he knew it not, Yet he laid it not to heart.

The parts thus set, and the words clear enough, those that are wise and judicious may read Gods meaning in them (as good Textmen can the original) without points, but this being not every ones gift, I shall take leave to condescend to the capacities of the meanest, and point out the full scope of the Prophet in these 3. conclusions.

1. The robbing and spoiling of a Nation is a very sad and shamefull penalty.

2. The Lord seldome or never inflicts this but upon great and weighty considerations.

3. He takes it very ill if these be not rightly weighed and well considered.

This first Truth will appear by that time we have observed it, to be Gods usuall course (when he means his rods shall smart to the quick) to brine them in shame; and if shame will serve turn and spare blood, he stays there and proceeds no farther. As indulgent parents deal with ingenuous children that blush to hear of the Rod; it is thought enough to shew it or shake it, or at most to stick it at their girdles; Look how the Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that feare him, Psal. 103.13. Yet rather then fail of Reformation, he makes them (when occasion serves) blush, & bleed at once. Thus he dealt with those that dealt falsely with him in the

Doct. 1.

*suffundere  
manule sangui-  
nem quam ef-  
fundere. Tertul.  
Apolog.*

*Ἀπειλεί πολ-  
λάκις ἵνα μὴ  
κῆτι τῷ ἀπει-  
λῶν εἰς ἔργον  
ἐξέρχῃ Chry.  
in Gen. Hom. 22.*

verse 22.

Covenant, he threatens to make them *greatly ashamed*, *verse 17.* meaning he would strip them naked when he strikes them, their penaltie was to be aggravated with infamie; to this purpose we finde them pointed at, as the ignominious captives of wanton conquerers, that gloried as much in their vassallage as in their ransome, *verse 22.* *This is a people snared in holes, &c.* their friends were either ashamed or afraid to come at them; *They are for a prey, (saith the Prophet.) and none delivereth, for a spoil, and none saith, Restore;* an hard case, when friends shall not own each other, when a common calamity sets them at such a shamefull distance.

Now when the Lord deals thus with a people, he would have you know by that token, that he is angry indeed, and expects that in their humiliations, besides their sighes and tears, they should expresse a shame that accompanies their punishment as well as their sin, which they were wont in such case to acknowledge, *Ier. 3. 24, 25.* *Shame hath devoured the labours of our fathers, we lie down in our shame, and our confusion covers us;* or in case they did not speak out, their Ministers were to do it for them: As *Ezra* very feelingly, *Cap. 9. 6.* — *I blush and am ashamed to lift up mine eyes to thee, O my God,* — Why? it follows; beside the sinne acknowledged, there was a shame treading upon the heels of it, *verse 7.* *We are delivered up to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day:* As their sinne was shamefull, and deserved a shamefull punishment; so it was a burning shame (he thought) that Gods Inheritance should be rob'd, & spoyl'd, cow'd, & conquer'd, by his and their enemies; and it must needs be so if we examine the grounds, and to that purpose consider first the parties, secondly the penalty.

Grounds.

I.

Parties.

1. For the parties; whether patients, or agents, *spoil'd, or spoiling,*



*spoiling*, God clothes them both with shame; and if Gods anger be the rule and measure of the shame, (as will appear) it will be hard to say for the present, which of the two are worst to passe; for whilst Gods anger is smoaking, and both under the fury thereof, it is not easily discerned whether he be more angry with the *reds of his fury*, which are his enemies, or *the people of his wrath*, which may be his own; Indeed when he hath done striking, it is well known, but not before, as we finde in the 10. Chap. of this Prophesie, comparing the 5. verse with the 12. At the first, Gods anger seems strongest towards his people, but when he hath done with them, then he faces about, and gives fire upon his enemies, *verse 16.* So that look how far Gods anger smoaks upon a Nation in generall, or any person in particular, so far they may hang the head for shame, as the Lord himselfe intimates in the case of *Miriam*, *Numb. 12. 14.* *If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven dayes? let her be shut out from the camp seven dayes.* Surely thus hath the Lord dealt with the *daughter of his people* amongst us; he hath not only spit in our face, but cast the excrements of our Nation, the robbers, & spoilers; over the surface of our Land; In which case we may take up the Prophets complaint, *Ier. 14. 1, 2, 3.* *Our land mourns, the gates thereof languish, and are black to the ground, their Nobles were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads;* The truth is, both noble, ignoble, agents, patients, amongst us may well be ashamed, the one for being so weak as not to maintain their own right, the other for being so powerfull to do the other wrong, *Psal. 52. 1.* That tyrant did but glory in his shame; that boasted how mighty he was to do a mischief. The oppressed may be ashamed to deserve it so justly, the oppressour for doing it so unjustly; Divine justice frowns on both: now the frowns of

Calvin in  
locum.

Joel 2. 6.

2.  
Penalty.

τὴν δὲ δεινὴν  
ἀλγὺν ὁμοίαν  
τοῖς ἀλόγοις.  
Chrysost. Hom. in  
ascen. Dom.

of a King are the shame of the subject, whether he be a favourite, or malefactor, especially when he is known to have been both; In the mean time God is righteous, and will not foul his hands with the sin of either, but glorifies himself in the just-deserved shame of both: The wantō spoiler *drives, & drags* his captive in triumph with bloody face, and bare feet, nothing to cover his shame, but his eye-lids closed up, and his head hung down, to think that no lesse penalty would answer his deserts, as that good Emperour *Mauritius*, over-powered and villanously abused by his servant and successor *Phocas*, sighs out his shame in the words of the Psalmist, *Iustus es Domine, &c. Righteous art thou O Lord, &c.* But that excused not the ingratefull Tyrant, *Indignus ille qui faceret*, he might be ashamed to deal so barbarously with one that deserved it not of him; as the one was ashamed to know he had deserved no lesse, so might the other to do so much. In the mean time Gods anger soots them both, and *their faces gather blacknesse*, so that the parties, whether agents, or patients, whilst they are in the smother of his displeasure, have a sad and shamefull time of it.

2. Consider the penalty, and then the truth will further appear; To be made a prey, and spoile, is the doome of the beast; therefore when the Apostle would shame certain gracelesse men to the ful, he calls or compares the *to brute beasts made to be destroyed*, 2 Pet. 2. 12. And of all men, none more sensible of this then holy men; *Sapiens miser est plus miser, &c.* such as have been in honour with God, and such honour have all his Saints. Mark therefore how sadly they complain in this case, *Psal. 79. 1, 2, 3.* It was much that *their dead bodies* should be beasts meat, and *their blood* run down the *chanells*; but that which they felt most in this misery was the shame of this penalty, *verse 4. We are become a reproach to our neighbours,*  
a shame

a shame and scorn to those about us; and had it been in their choise, would rather have fallen under thunder-stroaks, or plague-stroaks, any judgement from heaven would have been more welcome then to lie at the mercy of men, *wilder then the earth*, whose tongues, hands, and hearts were set on fire from hell. No plague like that of a plundering enemy, that *delights in warre*; so David thought that knew them of old, and in his choise prefers the plague before them, *2 Sam. 24. 14.* He could never think of them without an imprecation, *Psal. 78. 30.* *Rebuke, O Lord, the multitude of spearmen, together with the bulls and calves of the people, — Scatter thou them that delight in warre*; When God gathered these rods and bundled them together, *he suspected the fury of his anger, and strength of battell*; and if God will honour him with the choise of penalties, he will not *consult so much shame* to himself and family, as to fall into their hands. It grieves not an ingenuous child so much to be scourged immediately by the Parent, as to be turned off at the second hand to a base and mercilesse groom; the plague-stroak comes from Gods hand, and here we commonly cry, *Lord have mercy on us*. But who can find in his heart, upon his knees, to ask his life & liberty at the hands of a mercilesse plunderer? or if he do, who can be sure to speed, that knows he shall lose his suit & breath together: since God and their consciences give them no quarter how can we expect that from them, which they have not received? But of all spoiling penalties none like that of a Civill warre: if a malefactor must die, better by any hand then his own; and if a Nation must needs bleed to death, better any do it, then they of their own blond and bowels; for there is much of Gods anger, and consequently much more shame in such a misery. God was too angry with the Israelites to let them die by the strength of battell, and



therefore expresses his fury more, in consecrating their brethrens swords to do execution upon them as so many condemned malefactors, *Exod. 32. 29.* To have a mother sentenced to death by the wanton cruelty of her own children, is such a shame and misery, as goes beyond the penalty in the Text; and yet this being our case, it will be worth our labour to pause upon it a while, and make the truth our own by way of application.

*Vse I.  
Informa-  
tion.*

This being so, that the robbing & spoiling of a Nation is actively a sin, and passively a shame, this will concern us all, before we passe forward, to consider what we have to do or suffer in this case: To this purpose it will be worth the while to take notice of this penalty, and consider these robbers, & spoilers, as they fall under a twofold cognizance; for they may be viewed as a double-faced piece; look one way, and you see a beautifull face, on the other side a deformed monster: So if we consider them *efficienter*, you may see more of God then man in them; but if you view them *instrumentaliter*, you shall see more of the devill then either; and both these wayes we shall do well to view them for our better information.

*I.*  
*Efficienter.* Consider them in Gods hand, gathered and bundled up for his own ends, which are ever high and holy, *viz.* his owne glory, and his Churches good: here we may call them (as *David* doth) the *men of Gods hand*, *Psal. 17. 14.* for though their will be their own, and that be bad enough, yet their power is Gods, and therefore good; so that if he commands us to kisse these rods, no childe of wisdom will refuse it; if he command us to spare and forgive these, it may, it must be done; *David* was wise that did it, even whilest he smarted under the shame, hee looks upon the Act as Gods doing, *2 Sam. 16. 10.* *Who shall say, Wherefore hast thou done so?* Here we have nothing to say, much lesse to doe, but something to suffer

*Nec operis sunt  
conscij, Bern.  
de grat. & lib.  
arbitr.*

fer, as we shall see in the next point, when we come to view these rods in Gods hand.

In the meantime we shall consider them as unlucky Instruments faine out of his hand, and such as have gone beyond their Commission; as an axe or edge-tool falling from a shelve, hath weight and sharpnesse enough in it to doe a mischief without a guiding arm; so it is certain, that though these rods can do nothing beyond permission, yet beyond their commission they may; and so much the Lord himselfe observes of them, *Esay 10. 5.* You shall finde that God had given a large Commission to the Assyrian, the rod of his fury, to plunder and spoil this people very severely, but yet with a purpose to leave in the midst of them a poor and afflicted people that should trust in the name of the Lord; God hath some mercifull purposes to reserve a number, and to let the proud Conquerour know that his Commission was limited under pain of his displeasure. *Howbeit* (as God observes of him, *ver. 7.*) *he thinks not so-but it is in his heart to destroy*, and on he goes with this resolution to the 15. *ver.* where the Lord takes him up with indignation, Shall the Axe boast it selfe, or the rod shake it selfe against him that lifts it up? In doing thus God leaves them to be dealt withall as those that have gone beyond Commission, *Esay 47. 6.* If they be such as shew no mercy, we may be sure by that token they are beyond commission, and we have leave in this case, to say and doe something too; and are to blame if we doe not; we are not in this case to conceal our rapes & wrongs as *Dina*, but to complain as *Thamar*, and (though it be with blushing) to let our Father know *what folly* (or fury rather) *hath been committed in Israel*; yea, to send out hue and cry after them as the Levite did the quarters of his Concubine thorough all the Tribes, and make out for right against them, or at least

2.  
Instruments  
taliter.  
*Infestantur vos  
& in vobis De-  
um-Salvian, de  
Provi. li. 3 & 4.*

*Zeph. 3. 12.*  
*Zach. 1. 15.*  
*Prov. 11. 27.*  
*Psal. 37. 12, 13.*  
*Esa. 41. 11, 12.*  
*Zach. 12. 1.*  
*Ibid. 3.*  
*Zach. 12. 6.*  
*Gen. 34. 2.*  
*2 Sam. 13. 19.*  
*Judges 19. 29.*

least for a just hearing of our complaints.

*vse 2.*

Of humiliatio

\* *DEW* Psal.

75. 8.

Psal. 8. 7.

Ezra. 9. 9.

Mala. 3. 16.

14

Rob'd of our  
God.

Psal. 41. 10.

This then being an hearing day, I shall make it my next work to move you all that have ears to hear, and hearts to consider, and tongues to complain, to joyn with me in this duty of the day, to joyn our humble complaints, and order them so, that God may know we are sensible of our sufferings, and sins that caused them; and in speciall manner it concerns you (Honourable Senators) that have a double interest in this duty, as you are Gods\* deputies that must hear our complaints with an indeavour to help us; and as you must *die like men*, and may come to suffer with us, suffer your remembrancer to doe his office, and mind you of our spoils, & robberies, and tell you that we have been rob'd of our God, & King, Justice, & Mercies, of all that made our Nation glorious, have we been rob'd, & spoiled, and it is a standing Miracle, that in these dreadful losses we have a *nail in the holy place*, a little reviewing in our miseries: A priviledge which God vouchsafes his own in evill times, to *speak often to each other*, which we shall doe well to improve, that God *may hearken and hear*, and a *book of remembrance may be written* of what the enemy hath done and we have suffered, for God records both when he affords dayes for the gathering his Jewels together, that *they may speak often to each other*, and all joyn to put up their complaints (as we shall doe) and tell him—

We have been robbed of our God, or the enemy at least hath done reason to make us beleve so, there be those up in armes at this day, that have cast it as a common reproach upon the towns and houses they have robbed and spoiled, *Where is now your God?* as if they meant to rid us of him with a word and a blow, *Down with them—even to the ground*, and then the word was, *Where is now your God?* An old blasphemy newly revived,



vived, and yet had we as much cause to beleieve it as the Prophet that first spake it. For our enemies proved it with as strong arguments as his did, *Our Tabernacles they defiled*; we could not call them Sanctuaries, for there was no safety, or protection in them; either for Minister or people that take them for their lives, the Shepherds being smitten, the sheep have been scattered, the lampes being drowned in their own oyl, the lights hid under their own bushels, Ministers and others in their owne Churches where they preacht & heard Christ freely, these prophane insolencies gave the people to suspect they should be robbed of their God as well as of their goods. Briefly (to omit those shamefull reproaches, wherewith they cloathed them from Head to foot that did but set their faces heavenward) Pious people were faine privately to steal that communion with their God, whereof they were publicquely robbed & spoiled, these times of hostility, and men of blood having been such backfriends to all pious and publique duties.

Next to him we have been robbed of our Commander in chief, one that was valued (in *Dauids* time) at many regiments of the vulgar, *Ten thousands of others*, one whom the Scripture calls the *breath of our nostrils*, and shall not the body struggle for life when this is stoppt: we might as well call him the light of our eies, and shall we then suffer that Ignominy (which *Naash* would have put upon the men of *Iabesh Gilead*) to have our right eye thrust out & which if we doe, it is to be feared, the other will goe out for anguish, and then farewell government, and in stead thereof, enter confusion. To be sure, he is called the *light of Israel*, alluding to the Sun in the firmament at least, (to goe no higher) let us take him so, and surely our losse hath been great, our case sad, like those shipwrackt persons we reade of in *Pauls* dangerous

2.

Rob'd of our King.

2 Sam. 18. 13.

2 Sam. 21. 17.

1 Sam. 11. 2.

Lam. 4. 20.

Acs 27. 20.

Esther 7. 4.

Ios. 10. 13.

2 King. 10. 10.

Acs 2. 20.

Judges 18. 24.

3.  
Rob'd of our  
Justice.

Prov. 6. 12.

14. 34.

voyage, where the Sun was not seen in divers dayes together, and withall no small tempest lying upon us. If this Sun of ours had been only eclipsed for a while, keeping his Chamber without his Bride, we could have held our peace, though we might have said as Esther, the Enemy could not countervaile the Kings dammage: Or if he had but stood still, *ἡ ἀδιαφορία τοῦ βασιλέως*, indifferent between East and West, whilst the enemies of Church and State were in chace, and the great quarrell disputing betwixt truth and appearance, our losse doubtlesse had been lesse: Or if he could have been brought back by those degrees from whence he was declined from us, our sick State might hope for long life, and suddain recovery by that good token. However I beseech you, let him not set in a cloud, (if our prayers and tears can help it) let him not be turned into a bloud or darknesse, for that boads a terrible day indeed. Lose him, lose all; In this case who can justly upbraid our passions? If any churlish trooper of Dan shall demand what ailes us, as they did of Michah when they had robbed him, may not we answer our plunderers, as he did his, Judges 18. 24. Have yee robbed us of our God, and King, and doe yee ask what ailes us? mock our humiliations? have yee robbed us of our bread, and then scoffe at our fasting? well, losers will have leave to speak, and if earth hear us not, heaven will.

We have been rob'd of our justice, the best flower in our Crown, so the wise man valued it in his accompt, that it was both *Columna & corona Reipub*: the pillar that supports, the Crown that adorns the Church and State: upon these termes we finde he commends it to us, Prov. 16. 12. The throne is established by justice; yea and advances it too, Prov. 14. 34. Justice exalts a nation, but (mark the antithesis, for it comes up close to the point in hand)



hand) *sin is a shame*; What sin doth he mean? doubt-  
 lesse oppression, the sin most opposite to justice: this sin  
 is a shame to any people, so that when the souldier shall  
 cut the *girdle* of authority, (as God threatens, *solvit*  
*cingula regum*) the loines and strength of that State must  
 needs be loose and infeeble: There's no argument more  
 certain to evidence a sad and decrepit State, then to have  
 the *water-course of justice* stoppt, or the waters so troubled  
 and embitter'd, that the thirst and the taste are of the  
 same danger. This hath been our sad case for many a  
 day, and moneth, and quarter-sessions together, where  
 in most places we have had none (or some as good as  
 none) in the place of Judicature, either for sentence, or  
 assistance, in so much that the insolencies of the oppres-  
 sor, and injuries of the oppressed, have been unsufferable,  
 and the cries have been so many and loud, that if there  
 were an *unjust Judge in heaven*, yet the sad importuni-  
 ties of his plaintiffs cannot but awaken him at length; in  
 the mean time we have been rob'd and spoil'd of that  
 which should right us in our spoils and robberies.

Job 12. 17. 18.

Amos 5. 24.

Ἄρεν δίκης  
 ἀρχὴν μὴδ' ὁ  
 Ζεὺς καλῶς δὴ-  
 νάται. Plur. ad  
 pres. Indoct.

Index injustus  
 latro cum pri-  
 vilegio, est sicut  
 medicus imperi-  
 tus homicida.  
 Colum. lib. 1.

We have been robbed of our mercies too; Those  
 amongst the rest, which were left us as so many golden  
 Legacies by that *Mother in our Israel*, of ever blessed me-  
 mory, upon whose Tombe you may finde them engra-  
 ven, in these golden particulars; *Religion reformed, peace*  
*well grounded, honour at sea restored, rebellion extinguish'd,*  
*England long and well governed, Scotland freed from the*  
*French, Ireland pacified, the Netherlands supported, and*  
*Spain awed*: So that our Nationall mercies then con-  
 cur'd with our justice to exalt our Nation, Prince and  
 people then having but one heart and minde, contested  
 in nothing more then to out-vie each other in their mu-  
 tuall offices of love on the one side, and obedience on  
 the other; a friendly part indeed. That was the time

4.  
 Rob'd of our  
 Mercies.

Ἀεὶ τὸν διέβαινα  
 καὶ τὸ συμφε-  
 ρεῖν ἀλλήλοις  
 πόλεις, καὶ δὴ-  
 μους καὶ οἰκίας καὶ  
 ἴσας καθ' ἑκάστον.  
 Ναχιμ. Iulian.  
 τι ἐστὶ φίλον  
 μία ψυχὴ δι-  
 σὶ σώμασιν ἐσ-  
 οικῆται. Arist.  
 Laert.

when



when the shepherd could drive, and fold his sheep, the Clothiers carry their woven fleeces for the common good and their private gain, without fear of Troopers; then might Ministers preach the word with boldnesse, and study the truth without interruption, that have of late been faine to hide themselves and their books, and glad to escape so; then might the Husbandman plant and plow, sowe and reap, and grow honestly rich without danger, whereas now it is guilt enough to have any goods found in their houses; glad they have been to fling the plough into the hedge, and think it well to part with their horse and harness upon condition they may be favoured so far as not to drive and draw away their own goods. O sirs! To be rob'd and spoil'd of such mercies, (as it is our shamefull misery, so) a just requital of their abuse, which God hath threatned to a people in our case, *2 Chron. 15. vers. 6. 7. In those times there was no peace to him that went out, or to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the Countries, and Nation was destroyed of Nation, and City of City, for God did vex them with all adversitie. Who can say, Blessed are the people that are in such a case? Or if any should be so far a Laodicean, as in this nakednesse and misery to think so, who (that hath his senses) could beleieve his report?*

5.  
Rob'd of the  
Remedy.

That which seals up our misery, we have no redresse for the present on this side heaven, when Authority hath been solicited with tears, and prayers, Answers have been returned that have begotten more tears. Froward children will cry when they draw more bloud then milk, yet hard to say, which suffers or sorrows most, the nurse or suckling. This sad Assembly hath heard with both ears the common voice of our complaint, *That the summer is ended, the harvest past, and we are not saved:* to which

Jer. 8.20.

which answers have been returned that favour of sorrow rather than anger; Not like that of the King of Israel in Naamans case, *rending his cloathes*, and suspecting a quarrell, but when he put forth a better passion and more suteable to the plaintiffs case, that mov'd him for justice in the siege of *Samaria*, (at what time they made eating of children by first and second courses) this wrought upon him rather sadnesse then wrath, and accordingly he answers, *If the Lord help thee not, how can I help thee out of the barne-floor, or the wine-presse?* But the while what shall we say next? It is pity to draw too violently at a sore breast, our next work must be to lie as quiet as we may, untill the Lord *open the eyes* of our State to *see a fountain*, (which we are to hope is at hand) though we see it not; In the meane-time wee should do wel to pity those tender breasts that have been drawn out to the full for our sakes, and to give in our discharge, as far as in us lies, (what concerns the great account is above us) but for our parts we may, and must give up a free and humble discharge, as Saint Paul to the Church at *Corinth*, 2 Cor. 7. 11. *The self same thing that you sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulnesse it wrought in you, yea what clearing of your selves, &c. In all these things you have approved your selves clear in this matter.*

Briefly to close up this point, That which concerns all, both Prince and people, Magistrate and Minister, is to consider what we have to do, and suffer in our severall capacities. That we have been rob'd and spoil'd, is granted on all sides, and the calamity being common, the mischief of plundering is made matter of merry discourse. But I beseech yee, let us be better advised by the Prophet, *Isai. Cap. 8. 11, 13.* not to say as some say, or to do as others do, but to *sanctifie the Lord in our hearts, and make him our feare*; which if we did, we shall then



be ashamed of this Nationall sinne, and penalty of ours. When a captive or malefactor, comes to caper in his chains, and play with them, he gives his Keepers occasion to double the weight of them. I beseech ye, let these we have, keep us low, and lower yet at the throne of grace; and as we have sent some hue and crie after these robbers, and spoilers, so let us send up as many sighes and tears, to think that no lesse penalty would serve our turns, then to be made the scorn of our enemies, and the pity of all good men. And surely the Wiseman wanted not for wisdom, and pity, when he speaks of a case directly like ours, and prefers death before it, *Eccles. 4. 1, 2, 3. So I returned and considered the oppressions, and beheld the tears of the oppressed, that had no comforter, &c.* An hard case, when the distressed soul shall crie for more weight, that he may be rid of his life and burden at once. This shall suffice for the penalty, which we see is very sad, and shamefull.

*Eccles. 4. 1, 2, 3*

Penalties, distinguished into

I.

Ordinary.

2. Doctrine.

From the penalty inflicted, we proceed to the cause alledged, and the point thence arising is this:

*The Lord seldome or never inflicts these but upon great and weighty considerations.*

To conceive aright of these, we must know, there are some ordinary penalties, whereof (as man makes not, so) God gives not any speciall accompt; these we may call, *Mala quotidiana incurfionis*, penalties of course, but not causelesse; Our just God inflicts them, and the just man may fall into them seven times a day, (like gold into the furnace seven times tried) and arise with advantage. These come and go *de facto*, without any other remarkable note upon them, beside the generall rule, and end of all, (viz.) Gods glory. Of this kinde our Saviour speaks, *Ioh. 9. 3.* when his Disciples took it for granted, that the blinde man, or his parents, were extraordinary delinquents,

*Prov. 24. 16.*

*Pfal. 12. 5.*

*Ioh. 9. 3.*



quents, to which Christ answers, nay, as elsewhere in the case of the *Galileans*, *Luke 13.1*. Giving them and us *Luke 13.1* to know that it is not safe to make any lowre or severe comment upon the dark passages of his providence, unlesse he please with his own finger to point at them; his interpretation being only safe and sound: and where he denies, and doth not distinguish, we are to rest in the wise mans rule, *Eccles. 9.1, 2. 7. 14.* *Eccles. 7. 14.*

2. There are extraordinary penalties, wherein God appears, and takes occasion to open and expound some kinde of sins with suitable judgement, and then expects we should read our sin in our punishment; this I take to be his meaning, when he commands *to hear the rod and who hath appointed it*; and that neither of these should be question'd here, he gives a clear and a full account of both; 1. if being blind (as he complains they were, *v. 18. 19.*) he doth not baffle them in their blindness, give the blow and start aside, but if they ask who smote them? he tels them plainly, it was the Lords doing, expressed with the Hebrew emphasis, which by way of demand doubles the answer (*q.d.*) I did it and wil justify it. *Extraordinary.*  
*Ingentia beneficia, ingentia flagitia, ingentia supplicia, Magd. in praecent. 5.*  
*Mi. 6. 9.*  
*Pla. 107. 43.*  
*Jer. 9. 12.*  
*Lan. 3. 40.*  
*Fidem verbis verbera faciunt Greg. in Exan. 37.*

2. If they would know why? he stands not upon his royall prerogative, (which is soveraign reason) but gives them satisfying reason suitable to their own principles, wherein he refers himself to their consciences, if there were not all kind of reason for what he did, and they suffered, there was a cause and there was *this* cause; 1<sup>st</sup> their sin in grosse (crowded into the ballance by the lump) was the common cause; and then 2<sup>ly</sup> certain provoking sins in particular (most intrinsically crosse to the covenant) were the speciall cause, so that both put together and so solemnly charg'd upon this people, clear the truth propounded, That when God inflicts such extraordinary penalties (as they then, and we now grone *Quamvis peccatorem se non sentiant, cognoscit pro qua specialiter culpa percutitur, crudeli flagellis percuti non erui, Greg. Mor. lib. 9. cap. 34.* under)

Jer. 5. 7.

φοβέτω ἡμᾶς  
τὰ ἔθνη αὐτοῦ,  
καὶ οὐκ ἀντιτάσσεται  
πρὸς αὐτὸν.  
Cbryst. Tom.  
6. Sermon. 87.

2 Sam. 14. 30.

Quid sit salu-  
tus tacet ut po-  
nitentiam agat  
ne inferat que  
minatur. Hier.

Vse 1.  
Informati-  
on.

under) he is very willing we should (not guesse at ad-  
venture, but) know for certain that he is necessitated to  
to doe this; and so he tels them, *Jer. 5. 7. How shall I  
pardon thee for this? (q.d.)* Set me in a way how it may  
be done with the safety of mine honour, and *command*  
*me*, if not, excuse me if I strike home for this. Now by  
that time this is seen and acknowledged, we are past the  
hardest propositions of agreement; and he calls us to a  
Treaty upon these termes, *Amos 4.* Tels his people there  
what he had done, and they had suffered, *v. 10, 11.* He was  
fain to deal with them as *Absalom* with *Joab*, that could  
not get speech with him, till he *fired his corn*: so he dealt  
also with these in the text, *fired them round about*:  
the cause was apostasy and obstinacy. They had started  
off from their God, and would not return upon sum-  
mons, therefore he wils them to consider where the dif-  
ference lay, and mind it, or he would proceed from one  
penalty to another, untill they give him a meeting to  
the purpose: something he had done, *ver. 10, 11.* but that  
was not all. Some more dreadfull penalty there was be-  
hind, which he leaves a blank for, in the *12. ver. This  
I will doe*—he saith not what, but let them suspect the  
worst, *if they prepare not to meet the Lord.*

This being so, there is yet *hope in Israel concerning this*,  
*Ez. 10. 2.* there is yet some life in our case, a *step at least*  
betwixt us and death, there is space enough for mercy  
to come and warn, if grace foresee and prevent the wrath  
to come, so that before we come to the last and great  
duty of consideration, we have by way of inference a  
twofold Information; which I shall commend to you  
in a twofold confectary, viz.

1. *Confectary.* 1. God neither smites nor spoiles a people without a  
cause, nor yet for every cause.
2. He is willing we should consider what sins of all  
others

others are the robbing and spoiling sins.

For the first, know for certain, that neither Jacob or Israel as then, nor England or Ireland now, are rob'd and spoil'd by fatall necessity, by any malignant influence of the stars, or conjunction of the planets; (as some that have nothing else to say, or do, would amuse the world withall) No verily, our Church and State have those stars within them, (and O that we were so wise to get above them) those stars, I say, that have fought in their order against us, and without which God uses not to fight with us; the Sun shines naturally, but is eclipsed accidentally, so God loves his own freely, out of his gracious inclination, but his frowns are forced, and his strokes are constrained, (like fire out of the flint) not without provocations, nothing can anger him but sin that fights against his will, nor any thing please him again till he hath his will of it, to this purpose he must and will smite; that is certain, but never without a cause.

I.

God smites  
not without  
cause.

Sapiens domi-  
nabitur astris.  
Eccl. 27. 4.

Deus bonus de  
suo, savius de  
nostro. Tertul.  
de Resur.

Jer. 7. 19.  
Παρά φύσιν ἢ  
ὀργῇ, καὶ φύσιν  
ὁ θεός. Gr.  
Naz. Ora. 6.

2.

Nor for every  
cause.

ὅς' ἀγανακτῶν  
ἐλπίει καὶ ἀπει-  
λῶν σῶσαι πο-  
θεῖ. Basil. Scil.

Hem. 11.

Jer. 30. 14.

Lam. 3. 40.

2. Nor yet for every cause: He is not so hot in the quarrell of his Covenant, that every sinfull unkindnesse should kindle him into a flaming passion, and make him pour out the fury of his anger, and strength of battle upon a people. No, no, it is granted on all hands (not only by us who are here humbled under his mighty hand, but even by those that are blaspheming his name in the camp) that God hath cause enough to be angry, or if it were denied, this great Assembly, this grand Jury of our kingdom, hath bills enough upon the file to testifie against us; so many that it is thought they will not all be found & charg'd home untill the Judge of all the world come to right himselfe. In the mean time we are here this day before the Lord, to doe him right in two particulars, viz. 1. Acknowledge the cause. 2. Accept the penalty. In each of these let us be free and faithfull I beseech you.

D3

Doe



I. Doe this Sirs, or there is nothing done in the way  
 Acknowledge of reconciliation. I hope there are none here so well  
 the cause. conceited of our Nation in generall, or themselves in  
 particular, to say or think, that God might have better  
 spared this blood that hath been spilt amongst us; or  
 that it might have been shed more justly elsewhere. If  
 any of those that stand in the gap this day (to pray, and  
 plead for his people, or to judge betwixt him and his)  
 harbour any such thoughts, let me bespeak you in the  
 words of the Lord, *O wash thine heart from this great  
 wickednesse, that thou maiest be spared, and let not these vain  
 thoughts lodge within thee.* Indeed time was when we might  
 have pleaded pity, upon better appearance of reason then  
 now we can. For instance; in the time of our *Marian*  
*persecutions*, about 90. years since, our Nation then  
 was in the first heats of its love, and it was pity then,  
 that Christs Lambs (that fell into so hard a time) should  
 be so butchered, and Bonnered as they were, weltring in  
 their blood: that was a time of love, and for the elects  
 sake those bloody days were shortned. So again<sup>r</sup> in the  
 year 88. Our Nation was unanimously agreed, Prince  
 and people both, upon a course of reformation, to purge  
 out the Romish poyson from the Church, and work  
 the Spanish leaven out of the State, & then it was thought  
 pity that those Pirats, and robbers (that brought a floating  
 Iland by Sea, to over-power ours by land) should have  
 their will of us; that design was blasted, and we in pity  
 spared for that time. So again, in the beginning of our  
 late Sovereigns days, both King and Parliament were not  
 only strongly united in themselves, but were upon the  
 work of uniting three kingdoms into one, to make a  
 threefold cord nor easily broken, and it was pity then  
 the Powder-plot should burn those bands at the first  
 tying, all this while though there were cause enough,  
 yet

yet there was not this cause, but now our sins coming to those bounds where God bids *stand*, and like the raging sea dashes against those white rocks of our kingdome, which are set to keep it off, it is now at that high tide, and so out of measure overswoln, that it is too much for the Land to bear it, or God to forbear it; so that the least we can doe is to take unto us words and acknowledge the cause. *Dan. 9. 7, 8.*

Not only so, but accept the Penalty too, *Levit. 26. 41.*

Doethis also, or we have but dallied in all our humiliations, it is in vain to pretend sackcloth and ashes, if we cloath not our selves with shame, lay our hands upon our mouthes, and our mouthes in the dust, and sigh our condition in the Churches words, *Micha. 7. 9. I will beare the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him*; Now by that time this is done feelingly, and faithfully, then we shall have leave to throw off our mourning garments, and cast them upon the back of the the scarlet whore, as is intimated in the next *ver. 9. Then shethat is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her* which said unto me, *Where is now the Lord thy God? mine eyes shall behold her, when she shall be trodden down like the mire in the streets.* In the mean time, it is a sad case I confesse to be rob'd and spoil'd. But is it not a heavy case to rob our God? Who began first? God acknowledges plainly what he hath done in the case, and why he hath done it; yet the proud sinner being charged in this case, boldly denies, *Mal. 3. 8.* and when convinced, yet argues the case, *ver. 13.* thinks he hath hard measure: God forbid there should be any of that temper amongst us, that shall deny or distinguish: we are come to acquit the Lord, and to accept with all humility this just deserved penalty. It is a shame to be stript naked, but it is worse to deserve it; It is a sad case to have such as *Iob*

speaks

2.

Accept the penalty.

*Lev. 26. 41.*

*Jer. 10. 19.*

*Mich. 7. 9, 10.*



Job 30. 1, 2.  
3, 4, 5, 8.

speaks of, such striplings as we would have been loath to *set with the dogs of the flock*; (for they were usefull creatures, but these the burden of the earth, and *viler then the earth*, ver. 7, 8.) that such as these should not only quarter, but wholly Lord it in our houses, command what they please at bed and boord whilest they stay, and take away the rest at parting; it is an hard case (we think) to hear and bear the lashes of such rods, but what is it to provoke that God to wrath, that might justly turn us out of our houses into hell the same houre; well, it is his mercy we are on this side of it, though for the present likely to be overwhelmed with miseries, yet *must our uncircumcised hearts relent, accept of the punishment*, and acknowledge there is a cause.

3.  
**Confectary.**  
What are those  
robbing and  
spoiling sins.

**Genera nihil  
agunt.**

Ezek. 12. 22.  
24, 25, 26.  
Deut. 32. 47.

But that is not all; we must put the finger upon the sore place, and see and say, There is *this cause* for it, so that now we are come to the second branch of Information, to take notice of those robbing and spoiling sins, which we shall finde coucht in the words, and refer to those that are specified in the context, and complained of in this Prophecie as sins most intrinsically crosse to the Covenant; these must be singled out, or we shall not know where to begin or where to end in the duty of humiliation. Briefly therefore (because generals work not so well in publique acknowledgements) we are to enquire what speciall sins the Lord points at as robbing & spoiling sins, which if they be not looked to in time, wil not only lengthen out that miserie under which we groan, but make way for a worse thing that may befall us; Now, though it were fitting that these should be discovered to the full, yet being in hast I can but shew them at a running view (as he that paints out an Army of enemies at a distance, thinks it enough to shew the heads of some Commanders in the Van, together with  
the



the tops of their colours, and points of their spears) so this that I shall say concerning these must suffice to conjecture of the rest that you may meet with in the conflict.

For the general, take in our Gospel sins that fight against the remedy, and lay a people open to wrath without a covering, *Jo 15. 22.* Now have they (saies Christ) *no covering* for their sin, having refused to put him on, who was the *white-rayment*, which he counselled them to buy for that purpose, *Re. 3. 19.* When a people are so high-mounted in the *seat of the scorners*, that the most pretious treasures of the gospel, & the dreadfulest terrors of the law, are belcht out of their mouths into customary oaths and imprecations (viz.) As they hope to be saved, or Dammy if they do not that which they never intended; when men make no better accompt of faith, then to swear by it, and of Repentance, then to scoffe at it as a thing hidden from their eies, when these graces of the new Covenant are trampled under feet, and blood of the Covenant accounted as an unholy thing, when they crucifie to themselves the Lord of life; if Grace and Salvation it selfe be thus abused and turned into wantonnesse, who or what shall save them from the wrath to come? This we find to be the generall complaint of this Prophet against this people in his time, a warning given them 60. years before the robbers & spoilers were fully let in upon them; given indeed, but not taken, till they had scoft away their God and Covenant, their liberties and lives, and came to lie under the fury of his anger and strength of battell.

Next to these were the sins of those, whether Priests or Prophets, which were by their office neereſt to God, and should have been farthest from provoking him. When it came to passe that the sins of these (setting aside their personall aggravations) were the same for number and nature with the basest of the people, the same pride and prophanenesse,

I.

Gospel sins.  
Rom. 13. ult.

Psal. 1. 1.

Hcb. 6. 10.

2.

S. n. Tuary sins.

Jer. 23. 11.  
 Esay 56. 11.  
 Ez. k. 34. 4.  
 Jer. 23. 21.

phanenesse, the same cruelty, and covetousnesse, the same  
 excesse, and uncleanesse, &c. and by these means so streng-  
 thened the hands of the wicked, that they came forth  
 in a full strength to make a Covenant with death and  
 hell, and to break all Bonds and Covenants with God;  
 it was then high time for God to look to his honour,  
 being (in good earnest) driven from the place where his  
 honour dwelt, which he was resolved to visit with a  
 vengeance, the first place he began withall, Ezek. 9. 6.  
*Mal. 3. 3.* It were too large to bring in the severall com-  
 plaints put up against these Sanctuary sinners by those  
 of their own Tribes; Wolves and Mastives may be a-  
 like in hair and colour, but differ much in their respects  
 to the fold, the one watches over it for good, the other  
 for a mischief; this the Lord saw, and therefore as there  
 was no remedy when the bad people abused the good Prophets,  
*2 Chron. 36.* so when the bad Prophets abused the good  
 people, there was no remedy but ruine, God calls in  
 all the robbers and spoilers round about, to make a prey of  
 Priest and People in this case, *Ez. 56. 9. 19. 11, 12.*

3.  
 Epidemical  
 sins.

Such I mean whereby Priest and people joyn'd hand  
 in hand together, to make a faction of hell strong e-  
 nough to over-power both the word and sword, when it  
 comes to this passe that Magistrates and Ministers (Gods  
 faithfull witnesses) are not able to make a considerable  
 party to deal with these, then no remedy, but this penalty:  
 thus was it with them, (and how much better of late with  
 us) when those Priests were the only men of worship  
 that could silence their brethren in a Lordly tone, and  
 courtly scoffe. As *Amaziah* did, *Amos 7. 11.* *O thou man  
 of God - Fly thy way, &c.* when these could by an Arbitra-  
 ry power of their own, dispence with the power of godli-  
 nesse, and the honour of Gods dayes, and in their rare  
 and solemn Sermons discourse the people into a dream

of

of wine and strong drink, Mich. 2. 11. (as ours did into whitson-Ales-Lords-day sports) and this so pleased the people that they were resolved (as most of ours are) to engage their lives, liberties, to maintain these pleasing devotions; this the Lord saw, then (and we may see now) to be an horrible thing, vid. *Ier. 5. ult. An horrible thing, &c. shall I not visit saith God for these things, &c.* Yes, doubtlesse in this very way that he now goes in, to let in the robbers and spoilers, and tels what they shall doe, *v. 17. eat up thy harvest, thy flocks and herds, &c.*

More particularly, the despising of Gods word and messengers, dared the Lord to spoil them. *David* could do no lesse in point of honour, then pour out the fury of his anger and strength of battell upon the *Ammonites*, when his gracious message and messengers were so shamefully intreated; and what remedy but ruine to that people that shal deale thus with their God? This spoil'd al, and brought in the finall plunder upon that state. *2 Chron. 36. 16.* and so doubtlesse it will upon ours, if not prevented; when a people shall so far under-value the word and Ministers, that either they are not heard at all, or (which comes all to one) for meer custome, the auditories either thin or thronged, according as times and persons are pleased; when we shall make a meer thorough-fare of divine ordinances, and take them in the way to our profits and pleasures, Feasts and Fairs, as the Lord intimates with complaint, *Ez. 33. 31, 32.* when men shall come with the same affections to the Temple as to a tavern, call for what they please, and like nought but what they call for! Thus did these, as this Prophet complains, *Ez. 30. 9, 10, 11.* *Prophesie to us pleasing things: which when the good Prophets could not in conscience do, but told them of their sown grapes & bitter clusters, they flung these reports into their faces with indignation, and*

4.  
Word despising sins.  
2 Sam. 10. 4.  
2 Chr. 36. 16.



*Iumentorum est  
eos calce norsu-  
que appetere, a  
quibus eorum  
vulnera curan-  
da contrahun-  
tur. Aug. Ep.  
10.*

added this above all, to thrust them into corners, v. 20. it was time for the Lord to pay them in their own coin, and deal with them as they dealt with his servants, and let them see how good it was to be snared in holes, and prison houses, v. 22. how they liked bolts and chains, slanders and scoffs; this had they done to men of the most noted ability and fidelity in Gods work, and this such a provoking and spoiling sin, that God reads their doom in the Prophets curse, *Ier. 18: 20, 21, 22.* the very judgment in the text.

5.  
Self-deceiving  
signs.

Micah 6. 8.

Adde to this their dalliance with God in holy performances, wherein they were content to be costly, so God would value their service at their own rate; they could talk of *thousands of Rams, and ten thousand rivers of oyl*, but if God had took them at their word, & told them that he required these things at their hands, he should have been charged as an hard Task-master, imposing impossible services: But when (in stead of these *vain thoughts*, which he could not think of with patience, *Ier. 4. 14.*) he requires real duties, *to do justly, love mercy, & walk lowly with their God*, here they started off like broken bows drawn beyond their strength; their fastings and prayers, services and sacrifices, were such noisome formalities, that the Lord starts off from them as so many dead and rotten carcases, that had neither life nor soul in them, professes his loathing detestation, *Ez. 1. from 12. to 21.* And whereas against this they pleaded, that God did them not right, in not regarding and rewarding his own ordinances, *Ez. 58. 4.* he there turns them in-side out-side to the world, and lets them know, they were not the services he disavowed, but the hypocritical & superstitious additions, the formal performances, for which he threatens not only to loath them, but his own sanctuary which was polluted by them, *Ier. 7. 12. 14.* and resolves to destroy

stroy all their wise contrivances, whereby they deceived themselves, abused the world, and provoked him to wrath, *Esa. 29. 14.* Mark what a plundering youth, what a merciless robber and spoiler he sends in upon them, for this very sin, *Esa. 10. 5.* *O Assyria, the rod of my fury, I will send them against an hypocriticall nation, a people of my wrath.*

Lastly, that which sealed up the *Ephah*, was their Apostasie, starting off from the holy Covenant, and from the pretended heats of their first love; A sinne so often mentioned and threatned, that the Prophets were as weary of speaking, as the people of hearing Gods complaints in this case, therefore the Lord in pity to his Prophets, and displeasure to this people, gives them a discharge, either of praying for them, *Ierem. 14. 10, 11.* or preaching to them, *Hos. 4. 17.* *Let them alone, saith God, (q. d.) they are joyn'd to their idols,* wedded to their wayes, and it is in vain to forbid the baines between them and their new-chosen deities; let them take their course, I shall reckon with them once for all. The thing that grieved him, was their forwardnesse to strike Covenants, and their readinesse to break them. In the times of their reforming Magistrates, (when Piety was in fashion at Court) then they will wade through bloud to get to the Temple, their cancel'd covenants shall be renewed, and new Covenants sealed and subscribed, yea heaven and earth shall be called to witnesse, what fast friends they were to God and their guides; hands, and seals, and oaths, and all that could be said and done to make sure work, and all this lasted very hot, (how long?) for a *slaying* time, whilst the sword was at their throats, the pestilence in their houses, the famine in the fields; so long, and not much longer, *vide Psal. 87. 34, 35.* *When he slew them, they sought him, &c.* This provoked the

6.

God-deserting

Psal. 9. 10.

Jer. 22. 7. 8. 9.

Lord exceedingly, as it doth a workman to have his work seem to fadge, and then to fail him; or a sutor to have his beloved accept of a ring, and break a piece of gold; and then to deceive trust; this gauls worse then if there had been a churlish refusall at the first profer. The first and suddain dislike of a man is imputed to strangeness, but a dislike upon knowledge charges the party repudiated with unworthinesse; in this case, all kindes of revolts are grievous, but those that are reiterated are insufferable. So to know Gods Name, and not to trust him, is a deserting with a witnesse, which he takes so unkindly, that if the whole flaming Army of his wrath can expresse the fury of his anger and jealousy, the provoking party in this case must look for it. It was for this that the Lord discovers so much passion by his Prophets, and tells them, their desolation should be so great, that other Nations should raise the wonder, and say, *Wherefore hath the Lord done this, to this great City? Why, what had he done?* vide Jer. 22. 7. *Prepared destroyers* (not weaponlesse, but) *well armed*, able and resolved, not onely to abridge them of their fuell, (which we now finde to be a great strait) but to make fuell of their fairest houses, and then to give satisfying reason for what was done, *vizt. Because they have forsaken the Covenant of the Lord their God.*

To these might be added many more, but these enough to let us know that when God gives up a people to robbing and spoiling, they would but look inwards, and if they finde not these sinnes making way for this judgment under which we suffer, let them argue the case with the Judge of all the world, and plead with him, that he works not by president; but if they finde these fore-running sinnes, and this judgment (of robbing, and spoiling) following at the heels of them, they need no more wonder in this case, then to see the Sun rising in the East,



East, and putting forward like a Giant in his wonted course, untill he sets in the West, which being ordinary, is not ordinarily regarded: But those amongst us that are wise, and would be glad to know (what's a clock by our Diall) how our time goes, it is fitting they should observe it, and to this duty we are called in the last place, being now come to the consideration required, partly by way of a serious acclamation in the scope of the Text and preface, partly by a severe objurgation, charging it as the great delinquency in *Jacob* and *Israel*, who though he were set upon by robbers, and spoilers, yet he was not gagg'd; yea they came not like thieves in the night, preventing all complaints and succours, but coming with such warning as they did, the wonder is, that God hears not of them either by outcries, or at least by sighes and groans; this moves the Lord by his Prophet here, to expresse himself with this wonder in the preface, and complaint in the closure of the words, *Yet he knew it now, yet he laid it not to heart.*

*Quid miramur  
si paria perpetu-  
mur, qui paria  
perpetramus?  
Bern. de consid.  
lib. 2.*

And was not this strange: to be rob'd, and spoil'd, and not to know it? The Prophet (*Hos. 7. 9*) thought it strange, *That gray hairs should be here and there upon them; and they not know it;* that there should be any symptoms, or evidences of a declining State, and they not foresee it, but to have the death-strokes, and tokens of Gods wrath upon them, and not to minde it; to be fired round about and scorched, and to be insensible of all this: If there were any thing left of the man, or the beast, in this people, it could not be but they must feel it as beasts, and know it as men; and doubtlesse so they did, the Prophet *Hos. 5. 13.* bears them witness they did, *Ephraim saw his sickness, and Iuda saw his sinne.* They did so, but how? *confusedly* they did, but *composedly* they did not; they knew what ayled them well enough, what their

*Hos. 7. 9.*

*Hos. 5. 13.*

their sinne was, and what their suffering was, *in sensu diviso*, but to put these together, *in sensu composito*, as the cause and effect, and to lay them so to heart as God required, this they did not.

And this seal'd up their misery, and layes them before us, as the sad patterns, and presidents of Gods wrath upon a brutish people, that onely knows he is angry, but not why; This he takes to heart, because they did not, and gives us to know, that

3. *Doctrin.* God takes it ill, when sinnes and sufferings are not rightly put together, and his meaning known.

Briefly, these things were written for our admonition; so much the Prophet implies in the preface, where he lifts up his voice to this purpose, that posterity may hear him, *verse 23.* *Who will hearken and hear for the time to come?* Or if that reaches not home to us, the Apostle takes it from him, and stretches it even to our dayes, and beyond, *1 Cor. 10. 6, 10.* *Now these things were our examples, and are written for our instruction and admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come:* So that unlesse we mean to be made pillars of salt, to season succeeding generations, unlesse we mean to be made examples to others, let us take examples by others, and be made wise at the best hand, and cheapest rate we can; to this purpose give me leave to put home the serious consideration of these things premised, and lay them to heart, as a gracious duty which the Lord calls for at our hands, and hath set apart this day to put forth the acts of it, being indeed such a work of the day, as will imploy all the powers and faculties of the soul, and is to be exprest in some especiall acts; which I shall briefly open to you, for the clearing of the truth, and so fasten it upon your hearts by way of application: As first it implies,

*An act of the Judgment,* commonly called the *mind-*

The duty of  
laying to heart  
open'd in five  
Acts. viz.

I.  
An Act of the  
judgement.

ing

ing of a thing, when the understanding is seen in its office, to weigh things aright in the ballance of the Sanctuary, and judges of them not according to appearance, but with righteous judgment, layes the sinne in one scale, and the judgment in another, and never gives over untill it hath the just weight of what God hath done, and we have suffered. Thus *David*, that at first had no more leisure but to cast his sinne into the scale in the grosse, 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. *I have sinned*, comes at better leisure to weigh it more distinctly, *Psal.* 51. 3. *I know mine iniquity, &c. (q.d.)* now I know what I have done, and what I deserve to suffer. This the Scripture calls *The returning of a man to himself*, as Christ expressees it in the case of the prodigall, that had lost himself, by not considering his wayes in his heart, did at length *returne to himself*. No doubt but before his return he knew what his folly was, and felt his miserie, and hunger, (and so did the swine he fed) but when he laid these together, and considered what his father was, and minded his return, then was he uncharm'd from his swinish disposition, changed in the *renuing of his minde*; and he that is brought to this, may be said, *to lay things to heart*. Pro. 14. 15.

2. *An Act of the will*, which is the first chosen principle, (*My sonne give me thy heart*) and the first choosing principle, whereby we choose what to do, or suffer in a strait, commonly called, a resolution upon a debate, when in evils we choose the least, and in good things the best. Thus *David* in the *choise* of three evils of penalty, chooses the least; and *Paul* in a *strait* between two good things, chooses the best, and in this deliberation, may be said to lay it to heart: According to the Wisemans advise, (*Prov.* 4. 25, 26.) after the pondering of our paths, to look upon the right way, and pitch there. Thus did not these do, and therefore were rather wilfull Luke 15. 17.

F

then

νοῦ τὸ θεῶν  
τέμενον.  
Pro. 14. 15.

Rom. 12. 3.

2.  
An Act of the will.

ἢ μετανοεῖν,  
ἀλλὰ προνοεῖν  
χρὴ τὸ ἀνδρα-  
σθέν. Epictet.  
apud Stob. c. 1  
Jer. 3 8. 9.



Jer. 8. 6. 8.

then wife; as the Lord upbraids them by the *brute creatures*. They stand not to deliberate whether they were best sinne on and suffer, or return and be saved, but there they lie like so many blocks, under a two-handed Saw, (the robbers, and spoilers) if God will snatch them like so many fire-brands out of the fire, well and good; if not, there they lie ready to be sawen and cleft out for the fire, smothered and smothered out in a carelesse neglect: Contrary to this, is a faire warning willingly chosen, and resolved on, to flee from the wrath to come.

3.  
An Act of the  
affections.

3. *An act of the affections*, as sorrow, grief, care, &c. whereby sad and passionate men are said to lay things to heart, as we finde it exprest to the life, in *Zach. 12. 10, 11, 12.* where they take themselves apart, every family apart, and person apart; and look upon him whom they had pierced, as one that had little deserved this cruelty at their hands, and fix their eyes upon that sad spectacle of their injustice: and at the sight of this they pour out their tears and passions, as the parent that weeps for his own child, or as he that is in bitterness for his first-born.

4.  
An Act of the  
conscience.

Jer. 31. 18, 19.

4. *An act of the conscience*, which we commonly call the pricking of the heart, when the judgement rightly inlightened, reflects upon it self, and upon cleare evidence of the fact, takes Gods part against it self, accuses, judges, condemns, and executes sentence upon it self, smites upon the thigh: As God observes it in *Ephraims* case, when he heard him complaining of his own foul misdemeanors; Ah, I was an *untamed heifer*, therefore ashamed and confounded to think of his youthfull miscariages. This the Lord takes as laying his case to heart, and finding what carefulness it wrought in him, what clearing of his God, and condemning of himself; what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, yea what zeal, and what revenge, the Lord pronounces him clear in this matter, and gives in his

his discharge, and absolution in the next words, No longer a beast now, but *his dear sonne, and pleasant childe*, ver. 20. So that when the soul is brought to this temper, that the sin works upō the conscience, more then the suffering doth upon the outward man, and can freely acquit God in his righteous proceedings, as *Ezra* did, in the behalf of this people, that after all that these robbers, and spoilers had done to them could say, *verse 13. After all that is come upon us for our evill deeds, and our great trespasse; Thou O God, hast punished us lesse then our sinnes deserve;* so when our conscience is rightly informed, by laying our sinne and sufferings together, that God hath done us nothing but right; and in weighing the case do so determine it, that passion gets not the upper hand of our reason, to say, O how severe hath God been! But, O how rude and ignorant was I, and in that point a beast! *Psal. 73.* When judgement is thus brought to victory, that Gods proceedings are clearly discerned, and our defects faithfully acknowledged, and the right use made of all, then are these things rightly laid to heart.

Ezra 9.13.

5. *An act of the memory*, whereby we recall things past and gone, and well-nigh lost, in the tumults and confusions of dangers and fears, (which are no friends to the memory) but when we can return into our fixed thoughts without any longer roving and wandring, and gather them close together to make a good result of them, then the heart takes fire, as *David* expresses, *Psal. 39. 3.* He was faine to bring many scatter'd and confused thoughts together, before he could work the right consideration of his case upon his heart; As he that fetches fire from the Sunne with a burning-glasse; gathers the scatter'd beams into a narrow compasse, and there must hold them fixt, before the matter will take fire; so there must bee good skill and pains taken to recollect memories of old on

5.  
An Act of the  
memory.

Zach. 2. 12.  
 תוֹכְחוּ וְתִקְּוּ  
 תוֹכְחוּ וְתִקְּוּ

Gods part, and as many forgotten injuries on our parts, and when these are brought together by a faithfull act of the memory, then the duty works kindly: This David calls *the examining our heart upon our beds*, Psal. 4. 4. the Prophet Zeph. 2. 12. calls *sifting and searching over and again*, (so the words would be read) *Excutite vos, iterumque excutite*; Let us sift and search our wayes, saith Jeremy, Lam. 3. 40. A duty which the Lord seriously looks for of all those that enter covenant with him of better obedience, and promises that he will bestow it upon his own, one of the first graces he gives in the new covenant, as we find Ezek. 36. 31. *Then shall you remember your own evil wayes, and doings, that were not good, &c. And loath your selves in your own eyes for all your iniquities, &c.* Lay these things together, and we may be said to lay them to heart, more then this God requires not, and lesse will not serve the turn. Therefore charges home the neglect of this as one of the main causes why he proceeds on in the severity of his purposes, as we find, Jer. 12. 12. *The spoilers are come in and made the Land desolate*, he grants that the Land mourns, and yet concludes they *laid it not to heart*. v. 11.

For Fryall.

EL. 10 ult.

Jer. 12. 11.

Briefly therefore let this be my warrant from God to charge home this duty, as ever we look to be rid of robbers and spoilers, or see an end of the fury of his anger which is not yet turned away, but *his hand stretcht out still*; Surely then we may know by that sad token the duty is not yet done which the Lord will have done by us before he hath done with us; he grants the *Land may mourn to him, and yet no man lay it to heart*; so that there is something more to be done then hath been done yet, which we shall doe well to enquire after; and to that purpose give leave to your unworthy remembrancer in Gods name to demand, Is it done? or is it not done? lay your hands on your hearts, and feele and answer whether these sins  
 pre-



premised; and this duty required have been laid to heart, doe you know what God hath done and our land hath suffered since this great breach hath let in the robbers and spoilers upon us? Demand.

What a strange question (you wil say) is this to be put to knowing men? are the heads of our tribes such strangers in Israel, as not to hear and know that which makes the ears and hearts of our State to glow and tingle? do not they know what multitudes of men and fums of money have been lavisht and lost amongst robbers and spoilers? what hopefull plants of our Gentry, and Nobility too, have been either cankered or cropt off in the bud? what deadly fewds are dayly increased betwixt family and family, as if lineage and language were to be confounded at once? Can other Nations ring of this, and ours not know it? Can the threats of the sons of violence and the cries of the oppressed scatter the noise of this like so much tempest and thunder, and we not hear of it? Reply.

True, this is to hear of it by the ear, (and perhaps at an uncertain sound) as many doe that having taken reports upon trust, make it matter of discourse, others of gain, and some make it matter of wit and sport, as if fools were seasonable in a Tragedy, and might have leave to throw darts, and say, Am I not in sport? Shall I praise them that doe this, or those amongst us that like and suffer this? I praise you not. Are Nationall robberies such light matters, that Nationall Mercuries may have leave to jeast upon them? It was not the Apostles mind, but the Corinthians Levity, to suffer fools gladly. It satisfies not to say, that the Court set the kingdome or city on work, and that the foole must be answered according to his folly; It were safer far to let that folly rest in the bosome where it first began, and not to suffer those (that should be wiser) to fight with the Devill at his own weapons, when doubt-lesse.

Answ.

Prov. 26. 19.

2 Cor. 11. 19.

Prov. 26. 5.

lesse he will have the ods and the last blow: I hope a word in this will be enough to the wise that know this is not the way to lay these things to the heart, by tickling the ear with them; nay, grant we heard these things with the right ear, yet is not that enough to work home this duty, for the ear may hear more then the eye sees, and what the eye sees not (we say) the heart rues not.

Reply.

*Plus valet oculatus Testis quam auritus decem.*

Yea, but some of us (you may say) are more then ear witnesses of these things, we have seen with our eyes enough to make our hearts ake, we have seen whole Troops and Regiments of as brave and daring men as the earth bears any (such as would have made our common adversary tremble to see their courage (or fury rather) acted in other kingdomes;) These have we seen to butcher each other in their own countries, soyling their land with their own blood, as if they meant to make a plentiful harvest for the great destroyer, we have seen goodly Lordships plundered and fired upon no greater quarrell, but because their owners could not defend them; Yea, we have seen whole towns (upon the like quarrell) storm'd and surpris'd and fired, because the Inhabitants durst not, or could not be at cost and charges to keep themselves safe within their own wals, these are things we have not taken upon bare report, but our eyes (the trustiest sense of all the rest) have seen these things and can speak them feelingly; as those that have heard with our ears, and our eyes have seen them.

Ans.

It may be so too, & yet for all this these things may not be laid to the heart; it is true indeed, the seeing eye and hearing ear are both the gift of the Lord, Prov. 10. 12. but this implies what is said elsewhere, that there is an eye that sees not, and ear that hears not, and yet both wide open, and such as can take in sounds and sights very readily; and what if there should be such amongst us too, that have heard, seen as much as can be spoken or heard, and are hereby

hereby enabled to write stories, and furnish tables with the sad relations of these things: O Sirs, as eating is not health, and drinking is not strength, but the means to procure both, so the hearing and seeing of these things is not properly the laying of them to heart, but the way and means, with Gods blessing, to doe it; the Priest and Levite that pass by the wounded traveller in the Gospel, may be supposed not only to see the bleeding spectacle, but to hear his languishing groans, but it was the good Samaritan that properly laid his case to heart, that laid him upon his beast; poured oyle and wine into his wounds, and left him not before some hopes of recovery.

And hath not our State done this too as far as in them lies: have not they took full information of our common calamities: sate out many a sad day and night, month, and some years, to consult upon these things, and are able for a need to give the world an accompt from what quarters this dreadful storm was first blown in upon us; what unhappy constellations and conjunctions are ghesse to be the second causes, what damage it hath done by Sea and Land: Yea, they can tell what goodly grounds this Land-flood hath spoiled, and on the other side what dirty ditches it hath filld, good for nothing but to breed roads and Efts: In a word they can ghesse who have been gainers and losers by this sorry bargain.

And truly this is worth the knowing, the blessing of him that dwelt in the bush be their cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, that their Assemblies may be directed and protected till judgement be brought to victory. It is good learning to know Gods wayes in the whirlwind; the outgoing of his displeasure in the effects; and happy they that can make good advantage of them so, but happier they that know them in the right causes: they are wise that know how and where these sad distractions began, but they are wiser

Reply.

Ans.

Esay 4.4.

fer



ser that know where they will end, and put forth all within them to be serviceable in that work. It is good that these things be laid to the head; and that there are so many able heads to whom they are now entrusted; But when they are brought from the heads to the hearts of our State, then God hath his end, and if his ends and ours meet, we shall be happy for all this; though this be the day of Jacobs troubles, yet the hope of Israel, and Saviour thereof in the time of trouble, will remember Jacob and all his troubles.

Jer. 14. 3.

Use 2.  
Direction.

To this purpose I am to bespeak you all (Honourable and beloved) according to the severall rankes and files wherein you stand, to expresse and improve some acts of this duty required, that the Lord may see and say there is many an hearty and affectionate soul amongst us, willing to give him a meeting, as *Jacob* did, and not let him go without a blessing, to this purpose let me but briefly name some few advertisements that may satisfie you, 1. when it is done; 2. how it may be done; 3. what if it be not; 4. what if it be; and I shall have done for my part, and pray that the Lord would doe his and yours for you, and so conclude.

I.  
When these things are laid to heart.

I.  
A Sympathy.

Know that God takes these things as laid to heart when they work in us these two properties, viz. 1. a sympathy; that we can hear of these afflictions of *Ioseph* as if they were our own, though for the present most of us are under safe roofs, many of us under our own, and as yet enjoy as much of our former satisfactions in wives and children, Families and goods, &c. as the course of these times can lawfully afford, if we can bring our selves to look upon these as if not considerable (as *Phinehas* wife upon her *Ichabod*) and set our selves as neer as may be in the case of the distressed families in our Kingdome, that are faine to fast upon other terms then we doe, because the

the robbers and spoilers have taken away their childrens bread, if we now feeling a little hunger could be more pincht with the thought of theirs, or beholding the sad countenances of each other, could bewail the rufull sight of theirs sitting in sad or forlorn postures, either in their own houses or (which comes all to one) under the dark roof of hungry and dismall prisons; O it were a brave spirit indeed that could in this case un-Lord or un-Knight himselfe in his heart for a while, as good *Nehemiah* did, who had *wine and oyl enough to make a glad heart & smooth countenance*, yea and (that which is more then the best He amongst us can boast of for the present) he had the Kings favour to maintain and increase this, yet as if all this were nothing, all was black and dark with him whilest the sepulchers of his fathers lay wast; surely it would become us well to look upon our land as a *Galgotha* rather then *Bethel*, of sepulchers rather then houses; a place that may be called after the name of *Isaacs* wels, *Esek* and *Sitnah*, strife and hatred, where there hath been great pains taken to dig and keep open the fountain of Justice, and as much strife and hatred exprest to trouble the waters; if there were no more but this, it might make our hearts bleed and sympathize with our State. This were enough, to see this representative body of our State, the glory of our Nation, to be accompred as a Traytour with the head upon the block, and the hand of many a bloody executioner lifted up to part the head from the body: What living member can chuse but sympathize in this case, and by fear and trembling shew, *he laies it to heart*?

When we can sentence our selves, to have as deep a share in the sin as in the punishment, when we can lay our hands on our hearts, and smite upon the thigh, and say, It is I Lord, I know none (in some sense) a greater delinquent then my selfe, if others have been Traitours

*Psal. 119. 119, 120.*  
David though not of that crew was affected.

*Ira secūre quoque horrenda menti.*

*Gen. 2.6.*

*Soli filii iram non sentiunt, nec tristantur in tristibus Bern. Ep 256.*

2.

A self-judging.



to our Sovereigne, I have been so to his Sovereigne, Lord of lords, and King of Kings, one that hath made me, not his creature onely, but his favourite, doubled many a blessing upon me, belonging both to life and godlinesse; and so much mercy streaming from the fountain of grace, might break my heart if it were not Admant: They that can say, and do this, feelingly and faithfully, may be said to lay this to heart.

2.

How to do  
this.

Consider what  
ours suffer,

*Si frater es,  
compatere fra-  
tri pro te pati-  
entis: si mem-  
brum, commore-  
re capiti pro te  
morienti: si non,  
doleas, lugeas, pla-  
gas, dolores, de-  
speris, belluam  
sapis. Ber. in  
Ps. 90.*

But how may this be done? Briefly thus, by putting forth, and stirring up some acts of naturall affection, which the Lord commands, and commends in his own, and charges the contrary as an *heathenish vice*: Could we to this purpose consider but these two things, *viz.*  
1. How miserable our friends have been made; and  
2. that our false and uneven reckonings with our God have made them so: When we hear of such a County, or Town, once the pleasing seat of our habitation, now made a Stage of wares, or cage of unclean birds, where the *Ziim, Iim*, and wilde *Satyrs* play, When some of us may say, There have I left my flock, whereof I was once a Minister, or my family, whereof I was once a Master, (not as the Estridge doth her eggs in the sand, but) as the mourning Turtle, scar'd from her nest and mate, sits groaning at a distance, to see or hear some bird, or beast of prey, to seise upon the nest and young, and spoil all. If this be not the sad case of some of us, it is doubtlesse of many in our Kingdom, and of some very near in relation to us, and if we could but think, what prayers and tears they have, and do put up for us, and others as yet in safety, that we may be kept from their condition, our hearts would melt into tears to do as much for them. And this is a means to set this passion a work.

2.

Consider,

2. What our sins have contributed to their sufferings; who can choose but tremble, to see his fellow bleed under



der correction, for the same fault, wherein he knows himself to be (not an accessory onely, but) a principall agent. Doubtlesse there are none of those wasting sins formerly mentioned, whereof this Congregation can freely wash their hands; and shall the Lord be visiting our sins upon our countrey, and kindred, fire our Nation round about, and we not lay it to heart? Cursed be that opinion of the *Antinomists*; whoever either maintains it in his thoughts, or takes occasion to start it in so unseasonable a time, is doubtlesse a great factour for hell, and puts poyson into our wounds, that they may not heal; *Are they greater, or better then our father Iacob?* It is recorded of him, *that he wept, and made supplication*; doubtlesse then his own and others sins were laid to heart, *Hos. 12.* And if they think God sees not any iniquity in his own, for which he is angry with them, they may do well to read over this Text once more, and I should think that if there were not one more besides this in the Scriptures, this alone were enough to let them know that he hath just cause to be angry, not onely with the sinnes, but even the persons, and prayers of his people, and when he is so, takes it very ill, if they take it not to heart: A truth so clear, that I am perswaded, there are few or none amongst us *Antinomians* in judgement, and open profession; but certainly, every remorselesse, carelesse sinner amongst us is such an one in his practise; and to such as these I have no more to say but this, as *Mordecai* to *Esther*, *And do you think to escape better then the rest of the Kings loyall subjects?* Have you any Charter to secure you, and yours from the common calamities? and to ensure you, that neither you, nor yours have any sins to be prayed out of the sealed *Ephah*? nor any hand in raising this storme? Well sirs, do not venture to sleep under hatches, whilest others are sweating, and tugging to get the vessell to shoar;

*Quid tam per-  
diti in istis, &c.  
quid amentius  
quam in malis  
esse, &c. lugent  
cunctas, tu le-  
tus es, &c. Sal-  
vian. de provid.  
lib. 6. c. 12.*

*Dan. 10. 2. 3.  
Eccles. 9. 8.  
Neh. 1. 4.  
Cap. 2. 2.*

*Est. 4. 14.  
ἐν δὲ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ  
ἐκείνῃ, τὸ ῥῆμα  
τὸ ἐπὶ τοῦ  
Μενανδ. apud  
Plut.*

*Jonah 1.*

*Quum aliorum  
peccata Deus in  
aliis videtur  
ulcisci, ostendi-  
tur hoc quanta  
sit connexio u-  
niversitatis in  
populo, tanquam  
unius corporis  
membra sunt u-  
niversi. Aug. in  
Josph. quæst. 8.*

shoar, It will be in vain for us to work at the pump, if such as these stop not the leaks, and all of us with one heart and minde, confesse and bewaile our guilt and interest in these common calamities. I beseech ye therefore, without any more ado, as many of us as meane well to our own souls, and love our Nation, let us yeeld up our selves to justice, and accept of this punishment; For if our uncircumcised hearts relent not, to think what others suffer, and what we have contributed to their sufferings, we have not reacht the main duty in the Text, for which the dreadfull spectacle of Gods anger is set up, even like a pillar of fire, *either to lead us (if it may be) to repentance, never to be repented of;* or if that may not be, it will make us examples to posterity, and it will be written of us, as of these, That the robbers and spoilers were sent amongst them, as the avengers of the quarrell of the Covenant: but there were a generation amongst them, would not beleeve that God had any such quarrell against them; yea they themselves were some of them scorcht with the flames, *yet they gave not glory to God,* by acknowledging, and bewailing the guilt, and accepting the punishment; therefore the Lord poured upon them the fury of his anger, and the strength of battell, &c.

3. But (say some of these looser sort) what if we do  
What if not? not? what if we cannot do this? it is not every mans gift, to put the finger in the eye for every sin, or to have tears at the fingers end; the task is too harsh for some mens complexions, and therefore the Physitians of Church, and State may do well to indulge to some mens tempers, that think this remedy as harsh as the disease; as good (say they) have our houses afire about us, as our consciences within us; and it is pity to over-presse soule and body at once; if God take away our states, we have the lesse to reckon for, and there's an end of their care.

Say

Wipe rhy  
mouth, (if not  
thine eyes) &  
reade, vid.

1 Sam 4. 3, 4.

2 Sam. 11. 11.

Esay 5. 12, 14.

& 22. 12. 34.

Say ye so? but what if God will not have it so? he expects the work he is now about should work a *carefulness in you, and a clearing of your selves*: but the truth is, it is with many of us, as with Bankrupts, (that had rather be in the Counter than their Counting-houses) So we, as soon enter into hell as into our hearts, to examine what is amiss there, therefore are resolved to let it alone, untill God come to reckon once for all: But this will be a sad reckoning, and so we shall see and say, if we come to be *judged of the Lord, and condemned with the world* at once, it will be a terrible plea, when God shall charge it upon any of us, that he spared our lives and liberties, bodies, and goods on purpose that we should make use of these forfeited mercies, for his glory, and the public good, that we should runne into the gap upon these dayes of publike humiliation, and upon our bended knees, say as *Ezra 9. 8, 9, 10.* that we should bring forth that which hath escaped the fire, and give it up to his disposing, not reserving anything of our selves, which he would have us deny for his sake. The misery of our times hath taught us in our common discourse to say, We can call nothing our own; Let us learn to speak this in good earnest.

Nay then (will some say) let him take our lives also, we shall never live merry day more, if we come to yoke our selves to the strict courses of covenanting, and reforming, as good be rob'd, and spoil'd by our enemies, as be hamper'd, and fetter'd by such precise, and religious yokes as are likely to be laid upon us, which neither we, nor our forefathers were able to bear.

To which I answer; first, Better so, then be suffer'd to run wilde and loose into hell. But secondly, there is no such matter intended, this is the cavill onely of the *sons of Belial*, that had rather take sanctuary at Rome, then in a refor-



*Amantibus  
facile, amentibus  
difficile.  
Ambr. in loc.*

a reformed Church: Assuredly God intends no bands for us, but what will be golden, and glorious, even the easie yoaik of Christ, hard to none that have their sound mindes: It was a yoaik to the young Prodigall, that his portion should be in his fathers keeping, but by that time it fell out of his own into the Harlots keeping, and nothing left of it to keep him, he was brought to think, that the yoaik of his fathers servants was far better then his miserable freedom: So doubtlesse, by that time our Nation findes (as it is now in a fair way for it) what it is to waste the publique stock in riotous living, and come at length to be beneath the hopes of borrowing, & no remedy but we must hire out our selves to those that may feed us with husks; it is likely we may be brought at length to think our fathers house and home worth looking after, where it is likely he will provide something beyond the bashfull modesty of those that think our former commons good enough if they may be got again; but if the Lord provide better, and we thrust off our mercy with a pretended humility, it is possible we may meet with that check which *Ahaz* had for his modesty, when it was construed infidelity and impiety, *Es. 7. 8. 9. 10.*

4.  
What if we  
do?

Gen. 41. 31.

To conclude, if upon these considerations, we can be perswaded to see and know the day of our visitation, if the Lord warning us by a burning shame, hath brought us to that temper, that it appears to him and the world, that his proceedings are laid to heart; there is more comfort belongs to such, then the heart is able to bear, without breaking forth into tears of joy. As it was with *Ioseph* and his brethren, by that time he hears them lay the fact to heart, and say, *Verily we are guilty, &c.* he can hold no longer, but must make known he was a brother; So by that time the Lord *Iesus* hears this Church of ours, (which

(which doubtlesse is as dear to him, as any in the Christian world) when he is once satisfied, that we have laid the quarrell of his Covenant to heart, that we expresse it in our whole course, <sup>1</sup> mending our old wayes, <sup>2</sup> resolving upon better, <sup>3</sup> bewailing what is done, <sup>4</sup> taking the Lords part and quarrell against our selves, certainly he can, and will hold no longer from expressing as much mercy, as can be expected from the Captain of our salvation, that is *consecrated* to our sufferings, that he might be as mercifull, as he is powerfull *and mighty* to save. It is as much as ever he can do to hold his hands from striking, and his voice from crying out-  
right against those that are mounted (as *Saul* was) with Commissions, to make havock of the Church; These rods of his fury shall be made passively such, by that time they have done his work.

Esay 16.5.

Esay 21.14, 15

Heb. 2.11.

Acts 9.

In the meantime, he cannot hold, neither from whispering in that comfort which doth belong to the reformed number of *Israel*, even in the next words to the Text, *Cap. 43. 1. Fear not, I am with thee, when thou passest thorow the fire, ver. 5.* This doth he speak home to the Party in our *Israel*, whose heart is engaged to be true to him, and might set in the work of humiliation and reformation. Doubtlesse, the robbing and spoiling by the sons of violence, shall but lay us in the way for the good Samaritan; the poore traveller in the Gospel lost nothing upon the matter but the Priests blessing, (as good lost as found) by that time he was once revived and recovered, he knew his friends from his foes, and so I hope shall we, when the Lord Jesus hath bound up our bleeding wounds, and shews himself good in his office to that purpose, *Esai. 61. 1, 2, 3.* Then shall we be able to say, It was good for us, that we have pledg'd our *German Brethren* in that cup which hath gone round in most of  
the

the reformed parts of Christendome, whereof if we had not tasted, we might have questioned the Fatherly course and care of reclaiming his wanton children, whereof we have now a pledge, and withall an encouragement the Prophet *Hos.* gives in this case, *Cap. 6. 2. 3.* After two dayes he will revive us, &c. Then shall we know, if we proceed on to know the Lord, that his going forth is prepared as the morning, and he will come as the former and latter raine upon the earth.

### FINIS

In the meantime, he cannot hold, neither from waiting in that comfort which both belong to the reformation of Israel, even in the next words to the text, *Cap. 6. 1.* For now, I am with thee, when thou shalt leave the face of the Lord, &c. This doth he speak home to the party in our Israel, whose heart is engaged to be true to him, and ought to be in the work of humiliation and reformation. Doublets, the robbing and spoiling by the lions of violence, shall but lay us in the way for the good Samaritan; the poor traveller in the Gospel lost nothing upon the matter but the Priests blessing; (as good lost as found) by that time he was once revived and recovered, he knew his friends from his foes, and so I hope shall we when the Lord Jesus hath bound up our broken wounds, and shew himself good in his office to that purpose, *Exod. 1. 2. 3.* Then shall we be able to say, it was good for us, that we have pledged our names to the cup which hath gone round in most of the



11

A

# S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

Before the Honourable House of  
C O M M O N S,

*At their Publique* F A S T,  
*Novemb. 29. 1643.*

B Y *K.*  
W I L L I A M B R I D G E, sometimes  
Fellow of *Emanuel* Colledge in *Cambridge*, now  
Preacher of Gods Word at *Yarmouth*.

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R E V E L. 16. 15.  
*Behold I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his  
garments lest he walke naked, and they see his shame.*

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L O N D O N,  
Printed for R. D A W L M A N.  
M. DC. XLIII.